

## GRADUATE STUDENT NEWSLETTER

August 24, 1998

**ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER**

This is the fifth edition of the newsletter established in the fall of 1995, which is meant to serve as a way of spreading information and encouraging interaction among graduate students, in all three of our programs (M.A. History and Philosophy of Religion, M.A. Judaic Studies, and Ph.D. Religion), and between graduate students and faculty members in the Department of Religion. This issue of the newsletter is edited by Leslie Orr. If you would like to be involved in the production of this newsletter, or if you can provide any interesting information for the next edition of this newsletter (spring 1999)—upcoming events, opportunities, or the whereabouts and activities of yourself or other grad students, former or current—just drop a note addressed to Leslie Orr in her actual (2060 Mackay) or virtual ([orr@vax2.concordia.ca](mailto:orr@vax2.concordia.ca)) mailbox. The information in this newsletter, and in the attached LIST OF STUDENTS AND THEIR INTERESTS, may appear a bit spotty. If you find yourself misrepresented or under-represented here, I hope you will let me know. In the past, information has been gathered through student-to-student phone calls and conversations, and if you would like to volunteer to collect information in this way, that might be the most effective way to get the news. Information about student and faculty activities that was published in earlier issues of the newsletter (the last newsletter appeared in the spring of 1997) is not repeated here. (You can ask Leslie for back issues, if you're interested.)

**GRAD STUDENT E-MAIL ADDRESSES.** Please send your e-mail address to Leslie Orr ([orr@vax2.concordia.ca](mailto:orr@vax2.concordia.ca)) so that I can prepare a directory. This will be included in the next newsletter. If you don't want your e-mail address publicized, just let me know—but I'd still like your address so that important announcements relating to your graduate studies could be sent to you by e-mail.

**NEW GRADUATE STUDENTS ORIENTATION DAY**

On Thursday, September 3 at the SGWU campus, from 9:00 to 15:30, the School of Graduate Studies is sponsoring including workshops/ information sessions, free lunch, tour of the university, and final get-together. Telephone 848-3800 for more information.

**RELIGION GRADUATE STUDENTS GET-TOGETHER**

Friday, September 18, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. in the Department of Religion seminar room. See the enclosed invitation. Please come!

## RESOURCES

**OFFICE STAFF.** Diane Boulé, who had been helping us all for many years as the secretary for graduate studies in the Department, has taken up a new position in the office of Dennis Murphy, a Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Science. We miss her a lot! She can be visited at her new office, if you are ever out at the Loyola campus. Meanwhile, this spring and summer, Clara Ventura has temporarily taken over from Diane until a permanent replacement is found. This will not happen until later in the fall, and there are probably going to be several months when Munit Merid (whose official position is Assistant to the Chair) will be single-handedly managing all of the Department's affairs, including graduate studies business. So be nice to her!

**INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY.** The Department of Religion is exploring ways of collaborating in teaching and research with the Departments of Geography, and Sociology and Anthropology. One of the goals in our association with these other departments is to enhance cooperation in the supervision of graduate students. If the orientation of your studies and research is such that contact with faculty and students in these other departments would be helpful or interesting for you, get in touch with your graduate program director (Leslie Orr for M.A. H&P, Norma Joseph for M.A. Judaic Studies, or Fred Bird for Ph.D.). Other opportunities, including possible research fellowships, are available for Religion graduate students at Concordia's Centre for Community and Ethnic Studies. Contact Norma Joseph for further information.

**INTER-UNIVERSITY COLLABORATION.** This year, Concordia and UQAM are once again conducting their joint doctoral seminar--a year-long, bilingual core course for doctoral students at both universities, with the collaboration of six professors, three from Concordia (Leslie Orr, Ira Robinson, and Jack Lightstone) and three from UQAM (Louis Rousseau, Jacques Pierre, and Giuseppe Samonà). This is the second time we have mounted this joint effort, and we look forward to having as stimulating and profitable an experience as the last time, in 1996-97, that this course was offered. If you are registered for this course, please note that the first meeting is **WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 6-9 pm, at CONCORDIA, in FA- 202.** The seminar will meet every two weeks thereafter, alternating venue between Concordia and UQAM. If you have any questions about this course, please contact Leslie Orr.

**JOBS AND FELLOWSHIPS.** The graduate student notice board--in the long hallway in Annex R (2050 Mackay), next to the seminar room--has many notices of interest, including advertisements of job openings, calls for papers, and announcements of fellowships. New notices are being posted all the time, so you should make a point of regularly checking this notice board. Look also in the seminar room for fellowship announcements, printed on bright yellow paper.

The newly established Institute for Canadian Jewish Studies at Concordia is integrated with the Chair of Canadian Jewish Studies and will be providing funding for a variety of projects. Of special interest to graduate students is the possibility of scholarships at both the Masters and doctoral level for this academic year (1998-99). There will also be some small stipends for internships, for students who will work with various Jewish community organizations. Students who wish more information about these opportunities should contact Norma Joseph.

Students who are Quebec residents and who will be enrolled in M.A. or Ph.D. programs in

1999-2000 should also consider making applications for FCAR (Quebec government) fellowships. The deadline for submitting the application to the Department is October 7. Students who will be in a doctoral program next year are also eligible to apply for the SSHRC (federal government) fellowship; the deadline for SSHRC applications is October 30, and, again, applications should be submitted to the Department in which you are currently registered. FCAR and SSHRC also offer support for postdoctoral research. FCAR and SSHRC applications and further information about these and other forms of financial support are available at the Graduate Awards Office of the School of Graduate Studies, 2135 Mackay, Room M201 (tel 848-3801). There is a big collection of information about various fellowships available for consultation at the Graduate Awards Office; this directory is also available on-line at"

[http://www.concordia.ca/academic\\_info/general\\_academic\\_info/ga.html](http://www.concordia.ca/academic_info/general_academic_info/ga.html)

The Awards Office is giving GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP INFORMATION SESSIONS:

Tuesday, Sept. 8, 12:00-13:00 (H 762-1-2-3)

Thursday, Sept. 10, 13:00-14:00 (H 762-1-2-3)

Monday, Sept. 14, 16:00-17:00 (H 760)

Wednesday, Sept. 16, 10:00-11:00 (H 771)

Friday, Sept 18, 12:00-13:00 (H 771)

Thursday, Sept 24, 11:00-12:00 (H 771)

Tuesday, Sept 29, 12:00-13:00 (H762-1-2-3)

**T.A. WORKSHOPS.** If you are going to be a teaching assistant this year, you should take advantage of the programs being offered this fall by the Centre for Teaching and Learning Services. On Friday, September 11, from 8:30 to 12:00, there will be a General Orientation, "Making the Transition from Student to Teacher," at the Loyola campus (DL 200). The following week there is a workshop series, that meets daily from 12:00-13:30, at the SGWU campus: Monday, Sept. 14—"How to Respond to Student's Written Work" (H762 1-2-3); Tuesday—"Instructional Skills" (H762 1-2-3); Wednesday—"Disruptive Behaviour" (H762 1-2-3); also on Wednesday—"Making Effective use of Library and Electronic Resources" (LB235); Thursday—"Grading and Assessment" (H760); Friday—"Leading Group Discussions" (H760). Professional Development Certificates will be provided to those who attend the general orientation and all five days of workshops. You should register for the sessions you wish to attend. For information and registration, telephone 848-2495.

**ENGLISH FOR ACADEMIC PURPOSES (EAP) FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS.** This is a course offered by the Centre for Continuing Education that is designed to help non-native speakers of English manage the demanding tasks of graduate studies effectively. If you are interested in this course, consult with your graduate program director, or telephone 848-3608.

**LIBRARY WORKSHOPS.** This fall, the Concordia libraries are offering numerous workshops, covering the following skills:

Navigating the libraries

Finding articles using CD-ROMs and online databases

Getting connected to Lexis-Nexis

Getting connected to internet search tools

Getting connected to government information sources

Vanier Library, on the Loyola campus offers hands-on sessions; you must sign up in advance for these (tel: 848-7766). At the Webster Library, on the SGWU campus, tools and resources are demonstrated; no sign-ups are required. Schedules for the workshops are posted in the library, and are also available at the library's website (<http://juno.concordia.ca>) under "services."

INTERNET WORKSHOPS are also offered by Information and Instructional Technology Services (H 925; tel: 848-7613). These people can also give you advice about setting up your computer or e-mail systems.

E-MAIL AND THE INTERNET. Every graduate student is eligible for a computer account at the university. If you have a computer with a modem, you can have access to e-mail and the internet from home. Otherwise, you can avail yourself of the computers in the Hall building or in the Library's Media Centre. E-mail is a very useful tool--for corresponding with people near and far, getting information, participating in discussion groups on specific topics, etc. You can also get into the internet, through your vax2 or alcor account (via lynx). The library provides access to computers, and regularly offers workshops which can provide you with information about how to use the internet--and Ann Golubowski, the Religion area librarian at the Webster library, is very knowledgeable and may be able to help you with specific questions and problems you have.

You can connect up with the Concordia library (<http://juno.concordia.ca>) through the internet from home, and do everything you can do at a terminal in the Webster library, and more (go to any library in Montreal, and to libraries worldwide). You can see which books have been recently acquired by the library, renew your books, and even make ILL requests.

Our own Department of Religion has a webpage, which needs updating, but is worth checking (if you have ideas for improving it, tell the Chair of the Department):

<http://artsci-cwwin.concordia.ca/religion/reli.html>

One of our M.A. students, Howard Gontovnick, has a webpage devoted to "Experiential Psychotherapy" ([www.cam.org/~howardg](http://www.cam.org/~howardg)). Howard is also interested in developing an on-line communication and resource center for Department of Religion graduate students--see his new website at [www.cam.org/~howardg/religion.html](http://www.cam.org/~howardg/religion.html).

There is a lot of amazing material out there on the net that can be used as a source of information--or as the subject of study. Some useful addresses to start with are:

Canadian Society for the Study of Religion:

<http://www.CHASS.utoronto.ca:8080/~bsalton/cssr.html>

Religion, Religions, Religious Studies: <http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gthursby/rel/>

American Academy of Religion: <http://scholar.cc.emory.edu/>

You may want to use the internet to do serious research on Judaism or Buddhism or Islam. Or you may be astounded, appalled, or amused by the proliferation of new virtual religious phenomena. Two sites that I am rather fond of:

The First Presleyterian Church of Elvis the Divine: <http://chelsea.ios.com/~hkarlin1/welcome.html>

Society for Keanu Consciousness: <http://www.empirenet.com/~rdaeley/skc/>

The "History-Net" has several useful sites. One is the H-Grad website, for graduate students, with information on getting into graduate schools, being a successful grad student, employment guides, and many other useful links: <http://h-net.msu.edu/~grad>. Another is a weekly listing of academic positions and fellowships in history and allied areas--including religion, Judaic Studies, and women's studies--<http://h-net2.msu.edu/jobs/>



**SCHOLARLY SOCIETIES.** Student memberships in scholarly societies are often relatively inexpensive, and offer many benefits—including subscriptions to scholarly journals, news about upcoming conferences and other professional matters, and a means of staying in touch with the most recent scholarship in the study of religion. These societies generally welcome graduate student participation, including students making presentations to their conferences. The CSSR has a student essay contest (watch for notices on the bulletin board in Annexe R). Some of the most important societies that you should consider becoming a member of are:

The American Academy of Religion (AAR)—write to Membership Services, Scholar's Press, PO Box 15399, Atlanta GA 30333-0399

The Canadian Society for the Study of Religion (CSSR)—membership secretary, Dr. Brian Aitken, Huntington College, Laurentian Univ, Ramsey Lak Road, Sudbury, Ontario P3E 2C6

La Société Québécoise pour l'Etude de la Religion (SQER)—write to M. Alain Bouchard, CEGEP de Sainte-Foy, 2410 chemin Sainte-Foy, Sainte-Foy, Quebec G1V 1T3

There are other societies that may be important for the particular field of study with which you are involved—for example, the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR—see the address below, under “Upcoming Events”), the Association of Jewish Studies (AJS), the Canadian Jewish Historical Society (CJHS), and the Association for Asian Studies (AAS). Check with a faculty member who works in the field of study you're interested in for suggestions.

**MONEY.** If you travel to a conference to deliver a paper, you may request reimbursement for your expenses from two sources. In neither case will you get back the total amount that you've spent, but only a partial reimbursement. You may submit a request to the Chair of our Department for reimbursement under the Faculty of Arts and Science Student Conference Travel program. You may also apply to the University's Graduate Students Association for reimbursement of your expenses. It's worth applying for both; your chances are better in the second case.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY AND BOOKS.** In the seminar room, on the ground floor between Annexes R and FA, are housed a number of volumes, including M.A. and Ph.D. theses produced by students in the department and various books (including reference works like The Encyclopedia of Religion) that have been donated by faculty members and others. These books are available for consultation (not borrowing) by faculty members and graduate students. The key to the cabinets where these books are kept can be obtained from the secretary, and should be promptly returned.

Through the support of several Innovative Teaching grants from the University, it has been possible to create two important and useful bibliographies. The first, an extensive "Women and Religion Bibliography" was put together by Sonia Zylberberg. This bibliography is available in a hard copy format at the Webster Library (reference section) and in the Department of Religion Library (in the seminar room), and on diskette in the Media Centre of the Webster Library. It can be obtained electronically through the Internet from an FTP site at the University of Ottawa. A project on "Broadening the Use of Audio-Visual Resources in the Teaching of Religion" has involved the work of Rosemary Hale, Noel Salmond, Leslie Orr, Norma Joseph, and Deidre Butler. It has resulted in the creation of a database/ bibliography of AV resources that are available at Concordia that are relevant to research and teaching in a wide range of areas related to religion. This database is available in the Department office. For further information about the Women and Religion bibliography, contact Sonia Zylberberg, and about the AV Resources database, ask Deidre Butler.

SPACE. Although the seminar room is a place where many meetings and graduate classes take place, we are increasingly trying to make this room of open access, as a place for graduate students to meet informally or study together. There are classrooms on the second floor both in Annexe FA and Annexe R, which are usually free, where meetings can also be held. The undergraduate Religion and Judaic Studies students have a lounge in the basement of Annexe R, and graduate students are welcome there, as well.

## UPCOMING EVENTS AND CALLS FOR PAPERS

The Fourth Annual Inter-University Graduate Conference on Interdisciplinary Studies in Religion and Culture, hosted by Concordia's Department of Religion, will take place in the spring of 1999. Past conferences have been wildly successful. A call for papers will be announced by professors in graduate courses; the deadline for submission of abstracts for proposed presentations will be in early February. Think now about what paper you'd like to present! Those who are not taking graduate courses and are interested in submitting a proposal should contact Deidre Butler. In addition to presentation of papers, volunteers are needed for the following tasks in association with the conference: (1) a fund-raiser—someone who will take responsibility for writing letters asking for funding from various people within the university and keeping track of these requests; this job starts immediately and continues throughout the year, but requires only about 2 hours of labour a month; (2) conference co-ordinators, who will start work in the early spring on various tasks such as advertising the conference, setting up the reception, etc., and who are willing to commit a total of between 5 and 20 hours of work; (3) volunteers for the actual day of the conference, doing registration and giving information at the conference site, being responsible for AV needs for the conference, putting up signs in the Hall building and setting up the reception, etc.; and (4) a person to take over as conference coordinator for next year's conference; this person must be willing to devote a considerable amount of time next year to this project, but for this year, would not need to expend so much energy and would simply be learning what is involved in the job of coordinator. Please contact Deidre Butler at 514 426-2815 or at [Deidre@inforoute.net](mailto:Deidre@inforoute.net)

The Journal of Religion and Culture is a Canadian graduate student journal, publishing papers and book reviews in the area of religion and culture. Editors are Deidre Butler and Sonia Zylberberg. The deadline for submissions of papers and book reviews is June 1 of each year; publication is in the late fall. Papers should be a minimum of 15 pages and book reviews must review books published within the last two years. If you have a paper to submit, would like to subscribe to or participate in producing the journal, or would like to have more information, leave a note in the JRC/ Grad Student Association mailbox (to the left of the faculty mailboxes). Volunteers are needed for the journal: (1) an advertising manager, who would be responsible for writing to various universities and presses to sell advertising space in the journal; this would involve a total of about 10 hours of work in the course of the year; (2) for the future, a person to take over next year as editor of the journal, who knows or who would be willing to learn Pagemaker, QuarkExpress or some other professional layout software; we would like to find this person this year, so they can be prepared to take over next year. Call or e-mail Deidre Butler if you are interested in either of these positions.

The Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) is having its Annual Meeting in Montreal this year, November 6-8, at the Hotel du Parc. This is a great opportunity to find out about current research in the areas of the sociology and psychology of religion. Sessions start 8 a.m. Friday Nov 6, and on-site registration for students is only \$15. (If you want to register in advance, receive a program, or join the society, contact: SSSR, Sociology Dept, Purdue Univ, 1365 Stone Hall, West Lafayette, IN 47907-1365.) In addition to the regular sessions (in which papers are being presented by several students and faculty members of our department—see below), there are several special tours being offered by people familiar to us. Susan Palmer, who got her Ph.D. from Concordia's Religion Department and is now a member of the Department's adjunct faculty, is conducting a tour on Friday afternoon—"Flying Saucer Religion and Quebec's Radical Right Catholics" (visiting the headquarters of the Raelians and the Pelerins de St Michel). Virginia Nixon (of Concordia's Liberal Arts College) and Laurence Nixon (a Concordia graduate and part-time teacher in our department) are offering a tour on Saturday afternoon—"History and Cultural Meaning of two Montreal Churches" (Notre-Dame Basilica and St. Joseph's Oratory).

## GRADUATE STUDENT ACTIVITIES

A lot has happened in the lives of Religion graduate students since the last newsletter came out in the spring of 1997. The saddest news is of the death of Ahmad Saleh, one of our M.A. students, who passed away on December 24, 1997, after a long battle with leukemia. All our sympathies go to his family. He will be missed in the Department. The Graduate Religion Students' Association has made a donation to the Cancer Society in his name.

THE GRADUATE RELIGION STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION invites your ideas, involvement, and energies. The executive committee consists of: Johanne Rabbat as president, James Jervis as vice-president and secretary, and Grant Martin as treasurer. Leave a message in the Graduate Student Association mailbox, which the Association shares with the Journal of Religion and Culture; it is located to the left of the faculty mailboxes in Annex FA. The whole purpose of the Association is to represent your interests as graduate students, and if you have any concerns to voice, this is a forum where you will be heard. The Association helps to support graduate student activities such as the Journal of Religion and Culture and the Annual Graduate Conference on Interdisciplinary Studies which are described above.

## GRADUATIONS

At the 1997 fall convocation, five M.A. degrees, and one Ph.D. were awarded to Religion students. Faye Wakeling wrote her doctoral dissertation on "Voices in the Struggle: The Source of Hope in a Methodology of Feminist Liberative Ethics"; it is based on her work with working-class activist women at St. Columba House, where she is director. Sonia Zylberberg received an M.A. in Judaic Studies; her thesis was entitled "Woman to Woman: Relationships in the Hebrew Bible." Sonia is now a student in the Department's doctoral program. M.A. degrees in the History and Philosophy of Religion were awarded to: Srdjan Gligoric (with a thesis on "The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Modern Public Education: An Analysis of the Influence of Calvin and Ignatius in the Sixteenth Century"), Marjorie Lee, Khaleel Mohammed ("The Jewish and Christian Influences in the Eschatological Imagery of Sahih Muslim"), and Daniel Stambler

("Spiritual Journeys to and from Buddhist Retreat Centres in Asia").

In the spring of 1998, Jutta Lehmann received her Ph.D.; her thesis was on "The Influence of the Theosophical Movement on the Revival of Astrology in Great Britain and North America in the Twentieth Century." An M.A. in Judaic Studies was conferred on Gordon Seal. And two students received M.A.'s in the History and Philosophy of Religion: Pipip Hassan (with a thesis on "The Political Thought of Muhammad Asad") and Grant Martin ("Making Sense of Religion and Religions: The Value and Limitation of Religious Unity in Diversity"). Both Pipip and Grant have been admitted into our doctoral program.

At this year's fall convocation, Steven Engler will be awarded his Ph.D.; his thesis is entitled "The Devil's Poor and the Invisible City: Charity, Order and Agency in Early Modern England." Two students in the M.A. History and Philosophy of Religion program will be receiving degrees, as well: Paul Hammett and Chandra Rice (who wrote a thesis entitled "Sometimes a Story is Just a Story: Story Collections and the Popularization of Buddhism in Japan").

Three of our former M.A. students—Johanne Rabbat (H&P), Sharon Gubbay Helfer (Jd St), and Shauna Beharry (H&P)—did not receive their Masters degrees but have been fast-tracked into the Ph.D. program, and are now engaged in doctoral studies.

**AWARDS AND FELLOWSHIPS.** Congratulations to those who were successful in winning fellowships! The following students are recipients of support for graduate studies in 1998-99: Shauna Beharry, whose Concordia University Graduate Fellowship is renewed for this year; Marlene Bonneau, whose fellowship from FCAR is renewed for this year; Deidre Butler, who was awarded both SSHRC and FCAR fellowships; Russell Daye, who received a Concordia University Graduate Fellowship; Sharon Gubbay Helfer, whose FCAR fellowship is renewed this year; Johanne Rabbat, who received an FCAR fellowship.

#### PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Sandra Walker-Ramisch's "Graeco-Roman Voluntary Associations and the Damascus Document: A Sociological Analysis" has appeared in Voluntary Associations in the Graeco-Roman World, ed. J.S. Kloppenberg & S.G. Wilson (London: Routledge, 1996).

Karen Capen (Schioler) is an Ottawa lawyer, in addition to being a Concordia Ph.D. student. She has recently contributed to the volume "Study Paper on Assisted Suicide, Euthanasia, and Foregoing Treatment" for the Ontario Law Commission (1996), served as a file analyst for the "Report of the Somalia Commission of Inquiry" (1997), and provided commentary for the Canadian Medical Association Journal on issues relating to alternative medicine (1997), and on the Krever Commission report on blood supply safety (1998).

Several of our graduate students made presentations at the regional (Eastern International Region) meeting of the AAR in Toronto, in April 1998. Deidre Butler presented a paper on "The Pathos of Love: The Erotic in Levinas and Buber," Howard Gontovnick spoke about "Ways in which Experiential Psychotherapy Engenders a New Sense of Spirituality," and Sonia Zylberberg gave a paper entitled "Women's Relationships: Biblical Models." Sonia also presented a paper at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Jewish Studies, entitled "Leah and Rachel: Competition or Cooperation."

At the Annual Meeting of the CSSR in Ottawa, in June 1998, Maria Mamfredis gave a



paper entitled "Can PGM XIII, the Eighth Book of Moses of the Greek Magical Papyri, be Shown to be a Jewish Magical Text?"

Faye Wakeling (Ph.D. 1997) is participating in a conference being held at the end of this month at the University of Guelph called Daring Hope, in celebration of the work of the Ecumenical Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women in Church and Society; Faye is making a seminar presentation on "Tears in the Social Fabric: Social Policy Analysis and its Impact."

At the upcoming SSSR conference, being held in November (see above), a number of Concordia students will be participating. Chris Helland will be speaking about "Science and the Sacred: Incorporating Technology in to New Religious Belief Systems." Bill Koulakis is giving a paper on "Millennial Paradigms: Wicca in the New Age." Maria Mamfredis will present a paper on "The Mishnah as Canon in Third, Fourth and Fifth Century Rabbinism." And Johanne Rabbat will give a paper entitled "The Dharma Ethic in Hinduism." In addition, a number of our recent graduates will be presenting papers at this conference: Roberta Cameron (Ph.D. 1997) on "Persons and Worldviews: Interrelated and Interconnected in the Thought of Wilfred Cantwell Smith"; Walter Krajewski (M.A. 1996) on "Voice from the Dust: A Literary Analysis of the Book of Mormon"; and Jutta Lehmann (Ph.D. 1998) on "The Influence of the Theosophical Movement on Contemporary Astrology in England and North America in the 20th Century." As already noted above, graduates Laurie Nixon (Ph.D. 1990) and Susan Palmer (Ph.D. 1992) are leading tours for the conference. In addition, Laurie is presenting a paper on "Mystical Experience and Temporal Lobe Microseizures," and Susan is giving a paper entitled "Moccasin Walking or Going Native? Confessions of a Self-conscious Sociologist"—as well as acting as convenor and/or organizer of several panels and showing a film for which she acted as consultant, "The Love Prophet: A Video Documentary on the Children of God/ the Family" directed by Abbey Neidick. Susan's recent publications include Aids as an Apocalyptic Metaphor in North America (Univ. of Toronto, 1997), a volume entitled Millennium, Messiahs and Mayhem: Contemporary Apocalyptic Movements, which she co-edited with Thomas Robbins (Routledge, 1997), and a volume entitled Children in New Religions, co-edited with Charlotte E. Hardman (Rutgers, 1999).

Also in order is a brief report on the Third Annual Inter-University Interdisciplinary Conference on the Study of Religion and Culture, which took place on April 27, 1998 at the Faculty Club in the Hall building. The conference coordinators were Deidre Butler, Rose Ftaya, Johanne Rabbat, and Marlene Bonneau. In addition to Religion students, paper presenters included graduate students from Concordia's Humanities, History, and Theological Studies programs, from McGill's Institute of Islamic Studies and English Department, and from Université de Montréal's departments of History and Theology. A special feature of this year's program was a session chaired by James Jervis on "Students, Teachers, and Jobs in Religion and Theology in Montreal"—presenters included Johanne Rabbat, speaking on "Graduate Students Initiatives"; Marlene Bonneau asking "What is the Government up to?"; Marie-France Dion of the Université de Montréal "Voicing Concerns of Doctoral Students"; and Prof. Ira Robinson speaking about "Job Opportunities for Religion Graduates." This was a very fruitful session. The upshot of the presentations and discussion seemed to be that graduate students in Religion must create their own opportunities. Academic papers presented at the conference by Concordia Religion students and graduates included: Barbara Davy's "The Reading Process: Theory and Interpretation," Sonia Zylberberg's "Laughing with Sarah," Alexandra Boutros' "I be longing to belong: Identifying Identities," Sharon Gubbay Helfer's "Reading Sarah Kofman," Khaleel

Mohammed's "Demonizing the Jews: Examining the Antichrist Tradition in the Sahihain," Abolfazl Sajedi's "Tabatabai's View Regarding Social Freedom in Islam," Deidre Butler's "The Women Girt their Loins with Strength: Gendered and Denominational Patterns of Violence in Medieval Texts," Gordon Aranoff's "Political Conflict in the Hasmonean Period: A Methodological Framework," James Jervis' "Is that Glass of Water Half Empty or Half Full? Ultimate Reality and the Secret Schism in Secret Mantra Buddhism," Grant Martin's "The Value, Limitation, and Transcendence of Religious Unity in Diversity," Howard Gontovnick's "Ways in which Experiential Psychotherapy Engenders a New Sense of Spirituality," Christopher Helland's "Premillennialism and the Community of Conflict," and Russ Daye's "Forgiveness as a Political Process: Rending and Reconciliation in South Africa." This stimulating and action-packed day ended with a very pleasant reception in the Department of Religion. If you are interested in being involved in the next conference, in the spring of 1999, see the information in the section on "Upcoming Events" above.

TEACHING is something that Religion graduate students seem to do a lot of.

Teaching undergraduate courses in the Department of Religion this year are: Marlene Bonneau ("Religion and Film" and part of "Major Religious Traditions"), Russ Daye ("Introduction to Christianity" and "Christianity and Modernity"), Maria Mamfredis (part of "Major Religious Traditions"), Johanne Rabbat ("Hindu Mysticism"), Sandra Walker-Ramisch ("Understanding Religion" and "Death and Dying"), and Sonia Zylberberg ("The Hebrew Bible").

Sandra Walker-Ramisch is also teaching at Carleton University in Ottawa. Other grad students who have teaching responsibilities outside of our department include Abi Bahar, who teaches in the Humanities Program at Dawson College; Louis Chauvin, who is teaching a course on "Sustainable Development Business Ethics" at McGill University's Faculty of Management; Russell Daye who teaches at the United Theological Seminary; Nalini Devdas, who is a tenured—and now retired—professor at Carleton University; Catherine Grimanis, who teaches English, History, and Moral and Religious Instruction at Kell's Academy; Paul Hammett who teaches at Sacred Heart School; James Jervis who teaches at Marianopolis; David Oliver who will be teaching a course in Concordia's department of Theological Studies this winter; and Patricia O'Rourke who assists in teaching medical ethics courses at McGill.

MINISTERING, in the pastoral sense, is another major occupation of our students: Bich Thi Dinh is a fully ordained Buddhist nun who, together with her uncle, manages the Tam Bao Pagoda in Montreal; Russ Daye is an ordained minister in the United Church of Canada; Paul Follett is also a minister; Peter Hannen is an archdeacon in the Anglican Church; Carlton Harvey is the District Superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene, Canada-Quebec Districts; Murray Magor is an Anglican minister; David Oliver is rector of St. Thomas Anglican Church in NDG; Patricia Peacock is an ordained minister and is the chaplain of Bishop's College School in Lennoxville; Myer Schechter is a full-time rabbi in residence at the Jewish General Hospital; and Bill Thomas is the Coordinator of Ministry for the United Church Mountain Valley Pastoral Charge, in the Eastern Townships.

Various other kinds of ministrations are carried out by others among our students—for example, Margaret Million is coordinator of services for disabled students at Vanier College, Patricia O'Rourke and Elizabeth Lamont both work at Royal Victoria Hospital, and Penny Soper is a psychotherapist for Concordia's Health Services.

## FACULTY ACTIVITIES

Since the last newsletter was published in the spring of 1997, there have been several developments that have altered the composition and character of the faculty of the Department of Religion. Most significantly, we have the retirements of Sheila McDonough and David Miller, and the hiring of a new member of the full-time faculty, Lynda Clarke, whose area of specialization is Islamic Studies. Professors McDonough and Miller, although officially retired, have not given up their research and teaching activities, and their continuing association with the Department is marked by their assuming "Adjunct Professor" status. Other adjunct faculty members are John Rossner, Howard Joseph, Marc Lalonde, and Susan Palmer. Lynda Clarke, who received Ph.D. from McGill in 1995, comes to us from a teaching position at the University of Pennsylvania. Her research is presently concentrated on classical Shiism and modern interpretations of Shiism in light of the classical tradition. She also has a strong interest in gender issues, particularly as reflected in legal texts and treated in legal reasoning; and mysticism, including comparative mysticism. Her recent and forthcoming publications include articles on sainthood, fasting, and suicide in the Encyclopedia of the Modern Islamic World (Oxford, 1995) and an article on prophecy in world religions for the Encyclopedia of Women and World Religion (Macmillan, forthcoming). She is preparing for publication an article on views of nature in Islamic mysticism and a volume of essays on classical and modern Shiism. Among her many recent conference papers and public lectures are: "The Influence of Zoroastrianism on Judaism, Christianity, and Islam" (1997); "Shii-Sunni Polemics" (MESA, 1997); "Nature in the Poetics and Metaphysics of Jalal al-Din Rumi" (AAR, 1997); and "The Role of Reason in Shiite Thought" (1998).

Two of our faculty members are serving the University in administrative functions: Jack Lightstone continues in the position of Provost and Vice-Rector, Research, and Rosemary Drage Hale, starting last summer, has taken up the position of Associate Dean of Graduate Studies for a three year term. Both attempt to combine research and teaching with their heavy administrative responsibilities. Since the report on his research in the last newsletter, we have the news that Jack Lightstone earlier this year delivered a paper at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Society of Biblical Studies entitled "The Extra-mishnaic Tractate Mourning and the Evolution of Early Rabbinic Guild Expertise: A Socio-Rhetorical Analysis" and that he will be presenting a paper on "Socio-Rhetorical Analysis and the Social Scientific Study of Early Rabbinic Literature" at the Annual Meeting of the SSSR.

Meanwhile, Rosemary Drage Hale's recent and forthcoming publications include: "Joseph as Mother: Adaptation and Appropriation in the Construction of Male Virtue" in Medieval Mothering (Garland Press, 1997), "The Silent Virgin: Marian Imagery in the Sermons of Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler" in Medieval Sermons and Society: Cloister, City and University (for which volume Hale is a co-editor) (1998), "Catherine of Siena" in Encyclopedia of the Renaissance (Charles Scribner's Sons, 1998), "Rocking the Cradle: Margaretha Ebner (Be)holds the Divine" in Performance and Transformation: New Approaches to Medieval Mysticism (forthcoming), and a review article in Signs of recent work on the history of women in Christianity. Professor Hale will be presenting a paper entitled "Performance Theory and Ritual Efficacy: The Use and Function of Late Medieval Devotional Objects" to the Universities Art Association of Canada this November. She continues to serve as the co-chair of the History of Christianity Section of the AAR, and is also involved in organizing the Annual Meeting in the year 2000, in Montreal, of SWAAC (Senior Women Academic Administrators of Canada).



Other faculty members have produced a number of new publications and conference papers, and have embarked on various new projects. Earlier this year, Fred Bird delivered a paper on "A Defense of Objectivity in the Social Sciences (Rightly Understood)" to the Society for Christian Ethics, a paper entitled "What is Required/ Expected for the Comparative Study of Religion and/or Ethics to be 'Comparative'?" at the regional AAR meeting in Toronto, and a paper on "Faith Development and Moral Development" at the Annual Meeting of the CSSR in Ottawa. In November, he will be presenting a paper entitled "Early Christianity as an Ecumenical New Religious Movement: A Sociological Inquiry" at the Annual Meeting of the SSSR. Professor Bird is beginning work on a new major research project on international business and global justice. Meanwhile, he continues to be the graduate program director for the Department's Ph.D. program.

Michel Despland will be on leave in 1998-99. In November 1997, in a ceremony on Parliament hill, Professor Despland was elected to the Academy of Letters and Human Sciences of the Royal Society of Canada. This great honour was granted him in recognition of his contributions to the study of religion, and particularly his work in the area of philosophy of religion, through his historical and historiographical studies. Prof. Despland is the president of the SQER, and has been, in addition, active in a number of other areas. He presented a paper on "Volney's Construction of Religion in General and of Islam in Particular" at the Annual Meeting of the AAR in November 1997 and in May 1998 presided at a round table entitled "'Ex Oriente Lux': Les Religions Orientales" at the Religionsgeschichte in Europa conference held under the auspices of the International Association for the History of Religions, in Hildesheim, Germany. Recent publications include "Les tutoriens des religions sous la monarchie de juillet font-ils du comparatisme?" in Le comparatisme en histoire des religions (Cerf, 1997) and a book on 19th-century struggles for equality, Les hiérarchies sont ébranlées: Politiques et Théologies au XIXe siècle (Fides, forthcoming).

Norma Baumel Joseph was granted tenure by the University in the spring of this year. She is the director of the M.A. program in Judaic Studies, convenor of the Chair in Canadian Jewish Studies and director of the Women and Religion concentration in the Department. Among her recent publications are: "Hair Distractions: Women and Worship in the Responsa of Rabbi Moshe Feinstein" in Jewish Legal Writings by Women (Urim Press, 1998), "A Feminist Scenario of the Jewish Future" in Creating the Jewish Future (Alta Mira Press, 1998), "Iraqi Jewish Mothers and Daughters" in A Heritage in Transition (York Univ, 1998), and "Searching for a Woman's Voice in Responsa Literature" in Shofar (forthcoming). Recent conference papers include "Gender Equality and Responsa Literature," presented to the 1997 AAR Annual Meeting, "A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing: Radical Change in Responsa," presented to the 1997 Annual Meeting of the Association of Jewish Studies, and "Disruptions in the Food Chain," a paper based on her ethnographic research among women of the Montreal Iraqi Jewish community and presented to the European Jewish Studies Association, which met in Toledo, Spain last month. Finally, Professor Joseph's work on Jewish divorce has culminated in a documentary funded by Multiculturalism Canada entitled "Untying the Bonds...Jewish Divorce," A Get Education Video and Guidebook (1997).

Michael Oppenheim's latest book, Speaking/Writing of God: Jewish Philosophical Reflections on the Life with Others, was published by the State University of New York Press in the fall of 1997. He is now pursuing a new project and book that correlates notions of the self in the work of some modern Jewish philosophers (Rosenzweig, Buber, Levinas) with notions in the



writings of some influential post-Freudian psychoanalysts (including Klein, Lacan, and Irigaray). His examination of the writings of Franz Rosenzweig continues, with an Introduction to a new book of Rosenzweig's translated essays, a long review of a recent translation of Rosenzweig's book on Jehuda Halevi, and a possible essay on a new translation of Rosenzweig's Star of Redemption. Professor Oppenheim is also happily completing the second and last year of his current term as Chair of the Department.

Leslie Orr has returned from her 1997-98 sabbatical leave, and has resumed responsibility as program director for the M.A. in History and Philosophy of Religion. A research trip to India last year—involving the consultation of unpublished inscriptions at the Epigraphy Office of the Archaeological Survey of India in Mysore and visits to a number of Jain, Hindu, and Muslim sites in the South Indian state of Tamilnadu—allowed her to collect a good deal of new material for analysis in the context of several research projects on medieval Tamilnadu. These include projects on the history of women, religious authority and leadership, and religious identities and religious communities. In addition to the forthcoming publications listed in the last newsletter, Prof. Orr has written an article on "Laity" for the Encyclopedia of Women and World Religion (Macmillan, forthcoming) and will be presenting a paper entitled "Tracing Women's Lives in Medieval Tamil Inscriptions" at the 1998 AAR Annual Meeting. Meanwhile, her "Jain and Hindu 'Religious Women' in Early Medieval Tamilnadu" has appeared in print, in Open Boundaries: Jain Communities and Cultures in Indian History (SUNY, 1998).

Ira Robinson is the president of the Canadian Jewish Historical Society. Among his recent publications and conference presentations are: "The Foundation Documents of the Jewish Community Council of Montreal" in Jewish Political Studies Review (1996); "Cyrus Adler: President of the Jewish Theological Seminary, 1915-1940" in Tradition Renewed: A History of the Jewish Theological Seminary (1997); "The Constitutional Documents of Canadian Jewish Organizations: Aspects of their Construction of Identity" (Canadian Ethnic Studies Association, 1997); "They Work in Faithfulness: Studies in the Constitutional Documents of Canadian Jewish Organizations" (Jerusalem Conference in Canadian Studies, 1998); "Dr. Joseph Kage as an Interpreter of Canada and the Canadian Jewish Experience" (Association for Canadian Jewish Studies, 1998); and "The State of the Canadian Jewish 'Public Square'" (Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs, 1998). Prof. Robinson's research interests focus on the adaptation of traditional Judaism in North America from the late nineteenth century to the Second World War. In this connection, he is preparing several articles, as well as a book entitled A Kabbalist in Montreal: The Life and Times of Rabbi Yudel Rosenberg.

Professor T.S. Rukmani is editing the book based on the papers presented at the International Conference on the Hindu Diaspora held at Concordia in August 1997. The book is scheduled to appear by the end of this year. Professor Rukmani was an invited participant at the International Conference on Hinduism and Ecology held at Harvard University last fall, and has been invited to take part in the International Seminar on Sankhya-Yoga at Lausanne University, Switzerland, later this fall. Her recent publications include: "Critique of Om Based on Early Upanisadic Sources" in the Journal of the Institute of Asian Studies (1998), "Tension between Vyutthana and Nirodha in the Yogasutra-s" in the Journal of Indian Philosophy (1998), "Sannyasa, Sankara and the Bhagavadgita" in the Journal of Studies on Ancient India (1998), and "The Yogasutrabhasyavivarana is not the work of Sankara" in the Journal of Indian Philosophy (1998).